THEY CALL IT "CAMP COURAGE".

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They Call It "Camp Courage"

For hundreds of the blind and physically handicapped, this Minnesota Lion project has provided "the most wonderful weeks of the year"

Handicapped youngsters are treated by their counselors to an outing at the Julsrud Memorial Zoo. At right, a cerebral palsied girl seems a bit apprehensive at her very first meeting with a young raccoon.

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EVERY NEW DISCOVERY is exciting for 12-year-old Bonnie. Last summer, she held a feather for the first time; she had never heard of one before. "Feather," she said, rhythmically stroking its soft edges. She kept repeating the name until its feeling and sound were one. "I can see why they named it 'feather,'" she exclaimed, "it sounds like it feels." Shy, pretty, with long dark braids, Bonnie, whose world is expanding rapidly, has been blind since birth.

Nearby, other children play with baby raccoons, lambs, fawns, and rabbits. A little girl, 12, caresses a chick and smiles, "It smells soft." She, too, is blind.

Bonnie and hundreds of other blind and physically handicapped children are enjoying the fun and adventure of summer camping at Camp Courage, facilities specially geared to their health and happiness, made possible to a large extent through the humanitarian efforts of Minnesota Lions. Owned and operated by the Minnesota Society for Crippled Children and Adults Inc. (MSCCA), 191-acre Camp Courage is located on Cedar Lake, near the town of Maple Lake, 50 miles northwest of Minneapolis. Lions of District 5-M have "adopted" Camp Courage and, since 1954, it has been one of their primary service projects. Through camp construction, donation of equipment, and the supplying of camperships ($50 is needed to underwrite the major cost of a week's camping for one person), Lions are among the camp's leading supporters.

Why do Lions believe Camp Courage is a worthy project?

Children, some blind, others with legs in braces or confined to wheelchairs, and still others having severe speech and hearing defects, are helped to develop self-reliance. They soon become aware of skills previously believed beyond their capabilities. In so doing, these children gain a healthier attitude about themselves and their handicaps. What Lion could help

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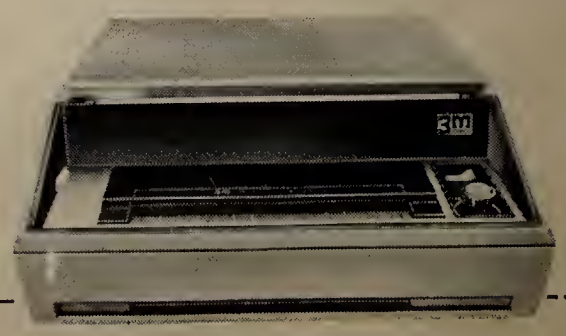

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Meet Bonnie! She and all the other blind and handicapped children at Camp Courage are the reasons why Minnesota Lions adopted it as a priority project

ıt get a lump in his throat when he es a boy, who has lived his entire e on crutches, beam with pride as tells how he paddled a canoe, or ɔw many Lions wouldn't feel an in- r glow when a blind girl thanks em for "the two most wonderful eeks of the year"?

While the speech and hearing clinic, lded in 1966, is open on a four-week ısis to children 8 to 16 years old, e two-week recreational program for e blind and physically handicapped open to any resident of Minnesota over the age of eight. Campers are grouped according to their age.

A staff of 100 counselors guide 800 children and adults a year. These counselors, fully trained and well aware of the needs of each camper, provide that all-important patience and understanding required to help the campers in this totally new environment.

There are now over 30 buildings, including a reception center, weather station and an arts and craft center. An outdoor amphitheater is ideal for mass get-togethers and special facilities have been arranged for campfires. A health lodge is equipped with an infirmary and staffed by a resident doctor and nurses. A heated pool provides swimming throughout the season.

Modern buildings at Camp Courage offer the children first-rate facilities for them to develop self-reliance. Since the beginning of the expansion program in 1966, the camp has served hundreds of blind and handicapped boys and girls.

Lions of District 5-M1 were the first to complete a project at Camp Courage when they opened a cabin in 1955 to accommodate 100 campers a season. Involvement came as a result of a meeting between the district governor at that time, Frank Callister, and Lion W.B. Schoenbohm, executive director of MSCCA. At first the camp was designed for the physically handicapped, but Callister asked that the blind also be admitted, not isolated in a separate section, but fully integrated with the others. The idea was immediately accepted by Schoenbohm and the Lions began their fund-raising campaign. Since Camp Courage opened in 1955, approximately 10 percent of the annual enrollment has been blind.

Later that same year the popular "Lions Den" was opened, compliments of what are now Districts 5-M4 and 5-M5. This building, equipped by the Minneapolis (Southwest) club, is the focal point for all nature-study activities at the camp. Here, blind campers are introduced to the world of science and nature through senses other than sight.

A fragrance garden for blind campers was soon developed next to the "Lions Den" and leads directly into the Julsrud Memorial Zoo. Named after the late Roundy Julsrud, a past district governor of 5-M4, the zoo is maintained by the district's Lions through a memorial fund in his honor. The Minnesota Conservation Department and the Como Park Zoo of St. Paul cooperate with the Lions each summer by providing fawns, raccoons, skunks, foxes, rabbits, guinea pigs and other small animals for the delight of the children. A unique feature of this zoo is the "rabbit village," a gift of the Stillwater club. Its "general store, bank, and grand hotel" form a miniature replica of an oldtime town, and the youngsters observe the antics of the rabbits hopping through the colorful buildings.

If happiness is a warm puppy, then a camp-full of happiness is warm lambs, ducklings, chicks, calves, baby pigs and goats. The barnyard zoo, developed on recently acquired farm land, provides the opportunity for the handicapped and blind children to fondle, play with and feed their new four-legged and feathered friends. They can even ride ponies. Try to imagine how a blind or crippled child, a child who has lived a life of darkness or loneliness, unable to run and play with other children, must feel when a lamb trots over to poke around for a snack, or when a chick snuggles-up in the child's hands. Glass incubators even allow the physically handicapped kids to watch chicks hatch. Is it any wonder that these are the "most wonderful weeks of the year"?

When Camp Courage began an expansion program in 1966, Minnesota Lions again led the way. It was at this time that the intensive therapy program for children with severe speech and hearing handicaps was initiated and a complex of buildings was needed.

Of the six new cabins constructed, four were made possible through Lion campaigns. A craft and nature building was a gift of District 5-M
the entire membership of 5M
money for a memorial cabin in
of all deceased Minnesota
Funds for two additional cabins
donated by the Minneapolis (S
west) club and by a Waseca Lio
his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Roland V

Three of these cabins were
cated in August, 1966, during
monies attended by an ardent
porter of Camp Courage, former
Vice-President Hubert H. Hump

The campers participating in
special therapy-recreational pro
often feel "left out" of activities
have difficulty making friends.
phasis is placed on helping them
self-confidence by participatio
group therapy as well as by prov
individual attention. Dramatic
ities and creative expression, desi
to facilitate communication, are s
uled to not only help the chi
overcome their handicaps, but to
them a better understanding of
problems as well.

At the close of each camping
son, designated clubs of District
hold a Halloween Party for the
dren. Begun in 1957 under th
rection of Past Dist. Gov. Al Sche
the afternoon's activities consis
games, entertainment, a songfest,
of course, candy, apples and p
kins. Nearly 250 blind and h
capped campers attended the
party along with the families o
host Lions. In all, the attendance
over 500 and prizes were awarde
the campers having the best costu

The adventure and happiness f
by these youngsters at Camp Cou
are now part of their lives, a
part that would be tragically al
were it not for the humanita
ideals of men such as those who
up District 5-M.—**Bob Kleinfelde**

Above, the minute wonders of nature are seen through equipment donated by the Lions. Kids at left find a ready friend in a tame, young fox while (below, left) a rabbit, held by a counselor, brings a quick, broad smile from two children. Below, a counselor helps a blind boy dissect a frog by the sense of touch.

Kentucky's Largest Family

For more than 30 years, youngsters on their own have found a home with the open-hearted Murdocks

by Arthur Whitman

WEEKDAY AFTERNOONS at 3:30, 60-year-old L. W. "Les" Murdock likes to be standing by the road that runs past his farm near Mayfield in Graves county, Kentucky. Pretty soon a yellow school bus pulls up and out tumble 18 boys, of every age from six to 15.

Some gallop past Les, down the sloping lawn to the country house where they live. The younger ones pause to tug at his jacket, or give him a friendly sock on the leg. A few stop to trade gossip or adventures for one of Murdock's deadpan quips.

"Hey! Ah passed 'rithemtic, Mistuh Murdock. Done got a C!"

"That's right handy, considering you don't know the alphabet past that."

"Did you hear Tommie Lee got sent to the principal again?"

"Why sure. He's trying to get his job away."

The boys have hardly dispersed before another bus pulls up and drops 20 girls. All the boys and girls, plus a handful of infants and pre-schoolers, are orphans or have parents who have drifted off and left them. Les and his wife Thelma give them a home.

Over the past 30 years or so, the Murdocks have provided for 400 children. Some have stayed just a few months, others grew up with them. At any given time in the last ten years, the number of kids on the place has ranged from 40 to 60. Today it stands at 46, which, Les allows, is a "pretty rough total."

The kids live in separate houses for boys and girls, under the supervision of the Murdocks and a small staff, and attend the local public schools. Les and Thelma have legal custody of all of them. They don't feel the guardianship gives them the right to keep any

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